

2
H E C U B A. 2

841.c.10
2
A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

By His MAJESTY'S Servants.

Hæc cum data

Est nova, novum intervenit vitium & calamitas,

Ut neque spectari, neque cognosci potuerit:

Ita populus studio stupidus in Funambulo

Animum occuparat.

Prol. Phorm. Ter.

By Richard West.

L O N D O N :

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PREFACE.

WHEN I read this TRAGEDY in the Original, I was warm'd with a Desire of seeing it in *English*; and so little resist'd my Inclinations, that I translated it. I thought it would prove an elegant Entertainment for a polite Assembly. The Moral appear'd to me instructive; the Diction unaffected; the Sentiments noble and just; and the Fable unmixt and natural, and very proper to incite the tragick Passions, *Pity and Terror*. However, I foresaw there would be some Difficulty in making it agreeable, in its Original Purity, to the Taste of an *English* Audience.

THE Objections to it were, that it was too short, too regular, and conducted with natural Simplicity; our *Tragedies* being generally long, irregular and unnatural. Yet, like a hot-headed Reformer, I vainly imagin'd some Regulation

of our Stage might not unsuccessfully be attempted, under the Authority of so great a Master as *Euripides*; and upon so faultless a Model as his *HECUBA*. I attempted unsuccessfully; and am not the first Martyr to Truth. I shall offer but one Reason more, and I presume it will be allow'd a very solid one, why this *Tragedy* did not succeed; and that is, *It was not heard*. A Rout of Vandals in the Galleries, intimidated the young Agresses, disturb'd the Audience, and prevented all Attention. And, I believe, if the Verses had been repeated in the Original *Greek*, they would have been understood and received in the same Manner.

IN Justification therefore of this *Play*, I am obliged to print, and submit it to the judicious Reader. If an Artist should recover an Antique Marble of *Praxiteles* or *Phidias*, and be at the Pains and Expence of Importation, tho' it might be maim'd in the Voyage, he would surely not merit to be ill treated; as it might give a View to the Unknowing of those just Proportions and Beauties in Nature, that the Antients were beyond dispute greater Masters of than the Moderns.

P R E F A C E.

v

I SHALL only subjoin what the Author of *Telemachus* has said upon the *Greek* Tragedy, in his Letter upon Eloquence, &c.

‘ M E T H I N K S, according to the Notions of
 ‘ Antiquity, there might be a wonderful Force
 ‘ given to Tragedy, without any mixture of
 ‘ that fickle extravagant Love, which produces
 ‘ so many pernicious Effects.

‘ A M O N G S T the *Greeks*, Tragedy did not
 ‘ at all depend on wanton Love. The *OEdipus*
 ‘ of *Sophocles*, has not any Touch of that Pas-
 ‘ sion; nor does it appear in any other of his
 ‘ Tragedies. *Corneille* has only weaken’d the
 ‘ Action, made it double, and distracted the
 ‘ Attention of the Spectator, by that cold Epi-
 ‘ sode of *Thesens*’ insipid Passion for *Dircé*.
 ‘ *Racine* has fallen into the same Error in his
 ‘ *Phædra*. These Two Tragick Poets, who in
 ‘ other Respects merit the highest Encomiums,
 ‘ were hurried down the Stream, and fell in with
 ‘ the prevailing Taste. The Wit then in Fashi-
 ‘ on produced Love in every Piece. The most
 ‘ affecting Scenes had no Force, without some
 ‘ whining Hero, who must utter his Sighs in a
 ‘ Quibble,

P R E F A C E.

vii

‘ R A C I N E, who study’d the great Masters
‘ of Antiquity, form’d a Plan of a *French* Tragedy
‘ upon the Story of *OEdipus*, after the Manner of
‘ *Sophocles*, without any Love-Intrigue. Such a
‘ Piece must have been lively, vehement and af-
‘ fecting. Perhaps it might not have been ap-
‘ plauded; but it must have moved, and drawn
‘ Tears from the Audience: It must have kept up
‘ a continued Attention, and inspired the Love of
‘ Virtue, and a Detestation of Vice: It must have
‘ promoted the Observation of the best Laws, and
‘ have pleas’d People of the strictest Morals.

E V E R Y one who saw the *Play*, may recol-
lect the Disadvantages under which it appear’d
on the Stage; such as might have made doubt-
ful the Success of a Tragedy, the most adapted
to the common Taste.

I A M to thank one Gentleman for the Trou-
ble he took in this Affair; in which his only
View was, that most agreeable one, of serving
his Friend.

P R O-

10

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This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots, possibly due to age or handling. The left edge of the page shows the binding of the book, with some visible stitching or glue. The overall tone is a warm, off-white or light beige.

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PROLOGUE.

Spoken by MR. BOOTH.

FROM a fam'd Tale, the Author of To-day,
Dis trusting his own Force, has form'd a Play;
Two Thousand Years are past since Athens heard
EURIPIDES, her ever-honour'd Bard!
Still all the Learned have, from Age to Age,
Revered and Study'd his Immortal Page.
Towns, Castles, Countries, Ages, wear away;
Learning and Genius never shall decay.
Minerva's sacred City is no more,
Long since a Prey to Vice and bar'rous Power:
The Friend of Socrates and Virtue lives;
Through such a Waste of Ruin still survives:
He lives; and to compleat his Glories past,
(Great Souls for Glory have the noblest Taste,)
He hopes those Honours to receive from You,
Which Rome, free Rome, and Athens, thought His due.
Like Them, let Us, to Merit give Applause,
And scorn to be excell'd in Virtue's Cause.
If You let fall a Sympathising Tear,
Blush not that your Humanity you wear:
Pity's the generous Feeling of the Soul,
And ought less gentle Passions to controul.
That Eye which melts at well-dissembled Woe,
Shows what the Heart in real Grief would do.
With Sorrows see a Captive Queen oppress'd,
How the most happy, may be most distress'd!
How dreadful the Calamity must be,
When her least Ill, is Loss of Liberty!

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Design'd to have been Spoken.

O*F all the tuneful Tribe, who pant for Fame,
And think no Blessing solid, but a Name;
Who aim, at once, to Give and Take Renown;
Our Friend Incog.'s most ignorant of the Town.
Instead of the prevailing, powerful Arts,
By which, perhaps, his Play might move your Hearts,
He boasts, that from Eu-ri-pi-des 'tis writ!
A Word so hard must surely awe the Pit:
And, Ladies, saw you that old Fellow's Picture,
'T would scare you more than any Modern Spectre.
How venerably Wise, his Aspect shows!
No single Feature like your Favourite Beaux!
A pretty Figure this, to please the Fair!
So sternly ask'd, deny Applause who dare.
What! a New Play, without New Scenes and Cloaths!
Without a friendly Party from the Rose!
And what against a Run still prepossesses,
'T was on the Bills put up at Common Prices!
The odious Creature too, in all his Play,
To shew the Force of Love, makes no Essay.
Achilles' Son sure own'd a gallant Heart,
Might he not then have felt the pleasing Smart?
Family-Fends are often thus compos'd;
He should have press'd her Bosom, when disclos'd.*

To

EPILOGUE

*To kill a tender Maid, & appease his Daddy!
I'd have made Love to Him, were I the Lady!
Had our Bard trod the Track to certain Fame,
Even HECUBA should have confess'd a Flame;
Her Women too, so thin the Scene of Men is,
Might have been smit by these two thundering Centuries.
These are the never-failing Helps to Praise.
He trusts from Nature his Success to raise:
Nature! so lavish of her Charms of old,
In ev'ry Shape new Beauties to unfold.
As various Passions then our Souls possess,
Let various Passions show the Soul's Distress.*

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Polymnestor,

Agamemnon,

Ulysses,

Talthybius,

Ægon,

Mælaines,

Mr. Booth.

Mr. Mills.

Mr. Bridgewater.

Mr. Roberts.

Mr. W. Mills.

Mr. Thurmond.

W O M E N.

Hecuba,

Polyxena,

Iphis,

Mrs. Porter.

Mrs. Cibber.

Mrs. Brett.

Captive Women, &c.

HECUBA.

TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Thracian Hords incamp'd at Distance. The Pavilion of Polymnestor in Front, and a wild and mountainous Country in Prospect.

POLYMNESTOR, MÆLAINES, EGON.

Polymnestor.

IN HIS Polydor, this Son of *Hecuba*,
Is now no more. Rise then, exult my Heart,
Arise secure; his Life, his Treasure's thine.
This Night 'twas done; *Mælaines, Egon*, both
My faithful Ministers, transfix'd his Heart.
He sleeps in Peace; Inconscious, happy Youth!
The Loss of *Troy*, the Slaughter of thy
Brethren,

The Mourning of thy Mother *Hecuba*,

Pain thee no more. This Happiness I gave.

Could then, Old *Priam* think, did he believe,

When first he trusted to my Care this Youth,

B

That

That when *Troy* fell, and *Hector's* valiant Arm
Could not defend those Walls the Gods had founded;
Could he believe I should attempt to raise,

At my own Peril, raise, his House again?
What! did not Age and long Experience teach him,
That Princes know no Tye, no Bond, but Int'rest?

The *Achaian* Chiefs but now encamp'd in *Thrace*,
'Till prosperous Winds shall fill their Sails for *Greece*,
Will thank me, will applaud me for this Deed.

Shou'd *Hecuba*, who knows her Son and Treasure
Are trusted here, reflect---- Yet what can she,
A feeble Woman, and a Captive do,

Whom the next Gale must bear to *Greece* and Slavery?
'Tis well: I stand secure amidst the Ruin.

----- *Melaines*, *Ægon*, welcome--- Say, my Friends,
Have you, as I ordain'd, disposed the Body?

Mel. It sleeps within the Bosom of the Deep.

Ægon. Or else intomb'd in the *Leviathan*,

Or *Bebemoth*, has found a nobler Grave.

Pol. And unobserv'd you pass'd, no Centinel
From the *Greek* Camp, remark'd your Midnight March?

Ægon. As you commanded, when the Moon arose,
And shot her chearless Beams across the Horizon,

We brought the Body of yet bleeding *Polydor*

From your Pavilion, cover'd with his Robes;

Secure along the silent Strand we bore him;

A gloomy Light, which thro' the hazy Air,

Just mark'd our Way, conducted us with Horror:

Steep we ascend the Summit of yon Rock,

Where the rough Cliff hangs low'ring o're the Main,

And blackens with it's Brow the Flood beneath:

Thence we committed to the Waves our Burden.

Pol. Well have you have done! thus wise Men act secure.

Mel. Oh! King of *Thrace*, the Gods have mark'd our Deed.

Pol. *Melaines* how! The Gods have mark'd our Deed?

Who hath reveal'd to Thee the Will of Heaven?

Mel. Attend what I relate; when *Polydor*

Was

A TRAGEDY.

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Was from our Hands dash'd on the Briny Surge,
As now descending, the steep Sharp we travers'd,
The very Spirit and the Shape of *Polydor*,
Appear'd upon the Desert Bourn beneath;
Swift did it glide athwart the Moon-light Gleam,
As Shadows pass across the Glebe in Autumn.

Pol. What Dream is this? what melancholy Vapours
Afflict thy Brain?

Ægon. Oh, no! 'twas real all.

Yet do we tremble, yet the horrid Phantom
Is in our Sight.

Pol. Go on, relate your Dream.

Mel. Sudden, as on we journey'd, the sad Spectre
Arrests our Course, and stands erect before us,
Dreadfully threatening with Contempt and Horror:
His Eyes distort, his Visage pale, his Breast
Clotted with Gore, such as when last we saw him.

Pol. Where hast thou caught, my Soldier, this Delusion?
Is thy Brain turn'd by want of Sleep or Food?
Or hast thou, by some meager Woodland Prophet,
Been preach'd into this Lethargy of Soul?

Mel. Oh! that it were, that it were all Delusion!
His Words have sunk into my very Heart.
He spoke, and with an Aire commanding Audience,
Articulate did pronounce these Words:

"Base Ministers of Avarice and Treachery,

"Say to your Master, to yon impious *Thracian*,

"The Lords of Heav'n and Earth, both Gods and Men,

"Will join in my Revenge; the Blood of Innocence

"And violated Faith demand aloud,

"And will be heard before high *Jove* the Avenger.

This said, as Bubbles break away in Air,
It disappear'd, and left us fill'd with dread.

Pol. Away, away! Can'st thou believe, *Melaines*,
The Gods, enjoying everlasting Peace
And blest'd Security, disturb their Quiet
To please these little unregarded Atoms?

B 2

Break

Break they those Orders that are fix'd eternal
To Motion, forc'd by strong Necessity
To regular immutable Progression?

Mel. Do we not feel? did not our Eyes behold?
Does not each shaking Limb ev'n now confess,
In guilty Fear confess the dreadful Vision?

Pol. The sick'ning Mind creates ten thousand Fears;
As when revolving Nature breaks this Form,
And dissipates the Man, we call it Death;
The conscious Mind appal'd, beholds with Horror
The dreadful Separation. Hence Chimæra's,
Wheels, Vultures, Furies, and a senseless Train
Of wild and incoherent future Nothings,
Disturb the unsettled Minds of frightened Idiots.
Hence too this vain imaginary Phantom.

Ægon apart. Behold the Vices gather round his Heart,
As Morning Vapours cloud the craggy Rock.

Mel. Oh *Polymerstor*? *Polydor* appear'd
In Blood, a living Witness of Dishonour,

An insupportable unerring Evidence

Of Guilt, less easy to be bott'd than Pain.

Pol. Have I not seen thee drive the yellow Lyon
Into the Toil; pursue thro' desert Sands
The spotted Pard; pierce with thy shining Jav'lin
The foaming Boar; and tame the Mountain Horse!
Have I beheld thee combat with thy Foe,
With the fierce *Darian*; while our wide *Thermidoon*
Resounded Blow for Blow, and frighted *Heber*
(As Fame reports) shrunk to his Oozy Bed!
What! shall one idle Image of thy Brain
Shake thee, my *Thracian*, like a sickly Girl;
Unstring thy Nerves, emasculate thy Vigour,
And soften thee into a very Woman?

Mel. Yet those were Nature's Objects I encounter'd,
Of Substance as my self; but when the Gods
Invest the very Air with Shape and Motion,
What Mortal Courage can support the Shock?

A TRAGEDY.

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Pol. No more, my Friends; cure your distemper'd Minds.
Enough of Death; now to Affairs of Life:
When will this *Grecian* Host decamp? when weigh?
Curse on their Visit here, they waste the Land;
Our Flocks diminish, and our Herds decrease.
What could the Foe do more?

Mel. King *Agamemnon*
Hath summon'd all his *Argive* Chiefs to Council;
This very Morn the assembling Princes meet
Around *Achilles'* Tomb, their honour'd Hero:
The Cohorts are in Motion: A Centurion,
As we repa's'd their Lines, did thus inform us.

Pol. The Subject of their Councils, dost thou know it?

Mel. 'Tis said, this Morning they divide by Lot
The Spoils and Captives of their conquer'd *Troy*.
Pol. Haste to the *Grecian* Camp, *Melaines* haste,
Learn their Debates, inform thy self with Care
To whose Allotment the chief Captives fall.

Learn to whom *Hecuba* becomes a Property;
And how the Captive Queen supports her Fate.
She was, in her Prosperity, a Woman
Endued with many and conspicuous Virtues.

Egon. She supports her Grief,
As mighty Minds should suffer mighty Evils:
Majestick in her Sorrows; still sublime,
Her Soul maintains its State, tho' struck with Ills
As quick as ever yet did touch Humanity;
Still she endures, and lives.

Pol. ----- *Melaines*, you'll observe
My Orders----- See, the Troops upon the Plain
Are on their March: their glittering Arms reflect
The Rising Sun, and flash upon the Day.

[*Exeunt Mel. and Egon.*

These Fools are Conscience-sick, fearful and weak.
Enough! they die. When Fear invades a Minister,
He then does, like the Palfrey Hand, grow useless,
And must be cut away. Cold Cowardice

Is

Is catching and destructive as the Plague.

Whether these Wretches, *Aegon* and *Melaines*,
Saw, or but feign'd they saw, this angry Spectre,
'Tis equal to the Mind of *Polymnestor*.

Let me reflect; ---- Let me recount the Profits,
The Gain this Day has brought. The Death of *Polydor*
Was needful to secure my future Quiet:

This Scyon, sprung from *Priam's* noble Root,
Might rise in Time, and overbear my Age:

Yet more, the Treasure that he left behind

Is now without Account ----- A ponderous Mass

Of solid Gold; Gold, that the World inflaves,

That only absolute and mighty Monarch:

Let me review the shining Heaps; they cheer

More than the Sun, more than their Parent *Phœbus*.

[*Exit Polymnestor.*]

SCENE. A Pavilion.

HECUBA, led in by her Maids, the Captive Women.

Lead me, ye Virgins, your unhappy Queen,

Yes, once your Queen, but now your Fellow-Slave;

Conduct, assist, sustain my trembling Limbs,

Loaden with Sorrow; Sorrow slowly moves.

Oh thou *Jove's* Lightning! and thou horrid Night!

And thou too, venerated Parent, Earth!

Parent of dark-wing'd Visions----- Wherefore nightly

Is my sad Mind torn with distracting Spectres?

Now *Polydor* appears, my youngest Son,

Preserv'd in *Thrace* from the dread Victor's Sword,

Appears in Blood, before my troubled Eyes!

And now *Polyxena*, my much lov'd Daughter,

Glides thro' the dusky Gloom, and shakes with Horror:

I saw; I knew them; I convers'd with Both.

Ye just Terrestrial Gods, preserve my *Polydor*,

That only Hope and Remnant of our House,

Who now in snowy *Thrace* resides, the Care

Of

A TRAGEDY.

7

Of his good Father's Servant, *Polymnestor*.

What Sorrows yet in store has cruel Fortune
Reserv'd for *Hecuba*? My Mind disorder'd,
Doubts, shakes and sinks beneath these boding Omens.

Last Night a trembling Fawn fled to my Knees,
Or seem'd to fly, from the devouring Wolf:

The little Innocent, with piteous Eyes,

Look'd up in vain for Succour from my Arm;

The Savage tore her from my Side, and drench'd

His Fangs in Blood of Innocence before me:

Yet e're this visionary Horror vanish'd,

My Eyes beheld *Achilles'* Tomb, the Scene

Where this dire Murder was perform'd ----- his Shade

Seem'd pleas'd, and glory'd in the precious Victim.

Ye Gods, ye righteous Gods, avert these Omens,
Avert them from my Child *Polyxena*.

IPHIS, HECUBA.

Iph. My Royal Mistress! you in me behold,

A mournful Messenger of heavy Tidings.

Oh! could my Words relieve, as they relate,

The Burthen of thy Woes! ----- The *Greeks* decree

That fair *Polyxena*, thy Child, shall bleed,

A Victim to *Achilles'* honour'd Tomb:

'Tis said, the Shade of that Immortal Hero

Arose Majestick, girt in golden Armour,

Repell'd the Winds, and stay'd their Fleets i'th' Harbour;

And thus it spoke ---- " Oh! whither wou'd you sail,

" Ye *Grecian* Princes? Will you thus desert

" Unhonour'd my Remains? The Warrior Host

Divided in their Votes: Some call'd aloud,

Give us a Victim. *Agamemnon's* Voice,

The Father of the War, declar'd for Mercy:

While this in general Council was decreed

To make Libation on *Achilles'* Tomb,

Of human Blood; but whether *Greek* or *Trojan*,

Yet

Yet undetermin'd: When *Laertes'* Son
Arose, and with inhuman Eloquence

Prevail'd, that fair *Polyxena* shou'd fall,
T'appease the inexorable cruel Shade
Of this fam'd Hero, of this Son of *Peleus*.

Hec. Ah miserable me! What can I say!

What Words? What Voice? What Mourning shall I use?

Unhappy! doubly so, by Age and Servitude!

Captivity and Age! ---- both hardly borne!

Alas! alas! Who will defend my Cause?

What Nation or what City? Good old *Priam*

Alas is dead! his Children too are perish'd!

Where? whether shall I go? ---- Oh! where find Rest?

Thou my calamitous and crying Foot

Guide me to *Agamemnon's* Knees: ---- My Child!

My Daughter ---- Daughter of Affliction! ---- Yes!

Of an afflicted Mother! hear my Voice!

Virtuous *Polyxena*! What boding Voice

Shou'd my Child hear? Oh, I can utter nought

But Sorrows now! ---- Captivity or Death!

Enter POLYXENA.

Polyx. What mean these Words of Sorrow? What Affliction
Does yet remain unsuffer'd?

Hec. Oh my Child! ----

Polyx. Why do you sigh? ---- why pause?

Hec. Alas! thy Life!

Polyx. Speak out, conceal it not:

My Fears are Prophets: Wherefore do you pause?

Hec. Oh Daughter! Daughter of a hapless Mother!

Polyx. Declare thy Woe.

Hec. The *Grecians* have decreed

To sacrifice my Child, to appease the Manes

Of *Peleus'* Son.

Polyx. A Weight, a mighty Weight

Of Woes you utter ---- Say, is there ought more?

Hec.

A TRAGEDY.

2

Hec. The publick Sentence of the *Argive* Princes,
Demand thy Blood upon *Achilles'* Tomb.

Polyx. Oh born to suffer! Oh inur'd to Grievs!

What guilty Demons, envious of thy Virtues,
Accumulate Misfortunes on thy Head!

I only left, the Comfort of thy Age,

And Staff of thy declining Years, must I

Be torne from thy Embraces? Must thy Eyes

Behold thy Child, thy only Hope and Will,

Sink to the Shades of *Pluto*, lost, forgotten,

Within the dreary Gloom of black *Cocytus*?

Yes! I deplore thy Woes in Tears of Blood.

Death is the Wretch's Refuge; I shall be

Unknowning, unreflecting, and unfeeling,

But, Oh! to think what thou must see and feel,

Sharpens the Pains of Death, and points its Sting.

Iph. On this sad Embassy *Ulysses* comes;

He comes, to tear thy Daughter from thy Bosom;

To tear her from thy tender trembling Arms-----

Haste to their Temples, to their Altars, haste;

Suppliant embrace the Knees of *Agamemnon*;

Invoke the Gods Terrestrial and Infernal.

If Prayers or Tears will bribe, or Gods or Men,

Save thy dear Child; let not thy Eyes behold

Her Virgin Blood crimson *Achilles'* Tomb.

End of the First ACT.

C

ACT

ACT II.

IPHIS, ULYSSES, HECUBA, POLYXENA.

*Iphis.***B**ehold *Ulysses*, wife *Ulysses* comes;

Swiftly he moves on this momentous Embassy.

Ulys. Madam, you know the Suffrages of *Greece*,
Or ought to know. Our Warrior Chiefs decree,
Polyxena shall die a Sacrifice,To honour the Remains of great *Achilles*.

I am commanded to conduct their Victim,

To lead the Virgin to the sacred Tomb.

The Priest ordain'd to make this vow'd Libation

Of purest Blood, is great *Achilles'* Son.

Learn thou, Oh Mother! to support thy Griefs

With Thought and Patience; 'tis high *Jove's* Behest.

Consult your Force, and present Circumstance:

Resign to Evils that you must endure.

Hec. Alas! what Force have I, but Sighs and Tears

Merciless Gods! Ah! why did I not perish

With *Troy*, envelop'd in my Country's Ruin?

Did you preserve me then, that I might suffer

Beyond my Sex? Immeasurable Woes!

Yet if a lowly Slave may be allow'd

To parley with the Foe, without the Taunts

Or Bitterness of Heart that sting the Wretched;

I would ask leave to question wife *Ulysses*.*Ulys.* Speak, ask; the Time, tho' precious, shall be yours.*Hec.* You may remember, when you enter'd *Troy*

A Grecian Spy, unknown and unsuspected;

Deformity and Rags conceal'd the Hero;

Yours

A TRAGEDY.

II

Your Limbs were feeble, and your Body bent,
Beneath a counterfeited Wretchedness;

While Drops of Death bedew'd your horrid Beard.

Ulys. I do remember well.

Hec. You may, 'twas *Helen*,

The Bane of *Troy*, disclos'd to me in private

That this feign'd Wretch was our sworn Foe, *Ulysses*.

Ulys. The Danger that I pass'd, yet lives within me.

Hec. You fell before my Knees, and pleaded Mercy.

Ulys. 'Tis true; I pleaded Mercy.

Hec. I preserv'd thee,

Rais'd thee from Earth.

Ulys. I do confess the Boon;

To thee 'tis owing, that these Eyes behold

The Chear of Day-light -----

Hec. What didst thou avow,

What promise, when my Captive, when thy Life

Was in my Hand?

Ulys. I promis'd, as a Captive;

I feign'd, I vow'd, I swore ----- recover'd Freedom.

Hec. Ungrateful, false-----let thy own Words condemn thee.

To thee my Hand was full of Grace and Mercy;

And this is my Reward. A just Return

For Life and Glory sav'd ----- *Laertes'* Son,

You Orators are a perfidious Tribe:

You pursue Honours, at the Expence of Virtue.

Friends you have none; or sacrifice the Men

You call your Friends, to please a giddy Croud.

Say, thou great Master in the Art of Words,

How is the Safety of your State concern'd

In my Child's Death? Have you not Beasts enough

For Victims? Must you squander human Blood?

Why shou'd *Achilles'* Manes be appeas'd

With my Child's Life! She never wrong'd *Achilles*.

Let *Helen's* Blood adorn the Hero's Sepulchre;

Helen, the Fate of *Troy*, and of *Pelides*!

And if a chosen Victim must be had,

C 2

Behold

yours.

Yours

Behold her Beauties exquisitely Fair,

A pleasing Sacrifice to Gods and Man.

Thus much for equal Justice have I said.

But now, *Ulysses*, hear me, for my self:

You bent the Knee before me, ask'd your Life,

I rais'd you from the Earth, and gave you Life.

Now let me bend the Knee: Preserve from Death

My Child *Polyxena*, my only Daughter!

Tear her not from my Arms, destroy her not;

She is my Joy, my only Consolation,

My Glory, my Support, my Guide, my Hope.

Victors shou'd use their Power with Moderation,

Since the most Happy are not always so.

I am a Proof of this; once the most Happy,

Now robb'd of every Comfort---- Wife *Ulysses*,

Regard my Sorrows, pity my Distress!

Employ thy Eloquence!-----Tell thou the *Greeks*,

How this one Act will tarnish all their Glories!

Say, 'tis inhumane thus to murder Captives,

And Women Captives, sav'd in Heat of Battle,

Sav'd from the sacred Altars of our Gods.

Thy Tongue will plead, thy Dignity will weigh;

The Words of common Men are lost unheard.

Iph. What savage Nature of the hardest kind,

That sees thy Sorrows, hears thy deep Laments,

But must perforce let fall one friendly Tear?

Ulys. Oh *Hecuba*! learn thou to bear Misfortunes

With equal Courage. I relate with Pain,

Their Herald only, the Commands of *Greece*.

I wou'd, were it my Choice, redeem thy Blood,

For mine preserv'd by thee---- Yes, I avow it.

Nor can I disavow the Vote I gave.

Among the *Grecian* Princes, that *Polyxena*

Should fall a Victim to our slaughter'd Hero.

In this the Weal of *Greece* is much concern'd;

It is a Debt to Valour, to the Soldier,

Who greatly dy'd i'th' Service of his Country:

"Twould be ungrateful, and unworthy Men,
To let his Name too perish with his Allies.

" Few are our Days, when this short Life is past,
" Let our sepulchral Honours last for ever.

And now, oh Queen! in pity to thy Sorrows,
Thy Sorrows great indeed! let me reply.

We have among us Fathers, mourning Widows,
Whose Husbands, and whose Children, now lie covered
With *Trojan* Earth; We sacrifice to them,
And call it Virtue----- You Barbarians know not
The Duties to the dear Remains of Friends.

Iph. How miserable is a servile State!
And how reproachful is the Victor's Language!

Hec. Oh Daughter! all my Prayers are lost; they pass
As Air. Unmov'd, the obdurate *Rhetor* hears.

Try thou thy Force, try thou thy Eloquence;
Fall at his Feet: Go, sing thy Song of Sorrow,
My plaintive *Philomela*. Plead thy Youth,
Thy Innocence: Relate, if Words can speak,
The Sorrows that oppress thy aged Parent!
Tell him, he is a Father, he has Children;
He knows, he ought to know, what Parents feel,
In a Distress like mine!

Polyx. Oh, wife *Ulysses*!

Why dost thou hide thy Eyes? why turn thy Face
From suppliant Grief? ----- High *Jove* commands my Death.
I must obey Necessity and Virtue.

And were I fond of Life, 'twou'd ill become

My Character and Birth----- My Father *Priam*
Was *Asia's* Lord: Bred in a Court polite

And glorious; and while Fortune smiled, the Hope
And future Pride of Princes; there conspicuous
I shone, among our honourable Women:

Now, by the chance of War, I am a *Slave*;

That Name first taught me to be fond of Death.

Unus'd to servile Offices, but ill

My tender Nature brooks a Master's Hand:

Yct,

Yet, *Hector's* Sister knows not to obey;
To ply the Loom, to work the stubborn Web,
As an imperious Purchaser shall dictate.

Nor shall a Slave contaminate the Blood
Of *Priam*; worthy once a Prince's Bed.

Behold your Victim! Lead me to your Altars.

Yes, I will quit the Light, descend to Shades
Oblivious; there inviolate and free.

Hope is not here, no distant glimmering View
Of Happiness in prospect.----- Oh, my Parent!

Urge not my Stay. Vain are thy Prayers and Tears.

Were they not vain, cou'd you recount the Evils
Captivity must bring, when every Virtue

By a hard Master shall be violated;

You then would think this Sacrifice a Blessing.

Death is the Wretch's Comfort; "And the great

" Calamity in Life, is living Ill.

Iph. When Virtue thus mixes with noble Blood,

'Tis as a Light on high, to guide frail Mortals,

And adds new Lustre to the Name it bears.

Hec. Well hast thou spoke, my Daughter; and thy Words
Have touch'd *Ulysses*----- If *Achilles'* Blood

Must be appeas'd by human Sacrifice,

Behold it here! Behold a grateful Victim!

Oh spare this innocent, unerring Maid!

Lead Me to the dread Tomb of your loved Hero.

Strike deep, I shall not shrink----- *Paris*, My Son,

My Son destroy'd this Offspring of great *Peleus*.

Behold a worthy, solemn, grateful Victim!

Ulys. The *Greeks* demand *Polyxena*, not *Hecuba*.

Hec. Then strike us Both, receive a double Offering.

Ulys. Thy Daughter's Death will fully satisfy

The Votes of *Greece*, and will appease the Manes

Of our Immortal Warrior; and I wish

The Publick Good did not demand ev'n This.

Hec. What has the Publick Voice to do with me?

Ulys. The *Greeks* command it, and will be obey'd.

Hec.

Hec. Yet will I cleave for ever to my Child:
You shall not part us.

Ulys. Yes, ----- you will resign.

'Tis Wisdom to obey, where Force is useless.

Polyx. Oh Mother! hear me! hear thy lost *Polyxena*!

And thou, *Laertes*' Son, learn to indulge

A Mother's Grief ----- Oh dear afflicted Parent!

Can thy weak Arm repel the Victor's Power?

Oblige him not to use indecent Force;

Oblige him not to violate thy Age.

Give me thy Hand, thy dear, thy much-lov'd Hand;

Join thou thy Cheek to mine ----- This the last Hour,

I ever shall behold the all-chearing Sun!

This the last Hour, I ever shall behold

Thy chearing Face! ----- Oh! 'tis too much, too much!

Thy Looks, thy Sorrows, are not to be borne.

Oh thou, by whom I first beheld the Day,

Farewell! ----- I go, I go to Shades eternal.

Hec. Ah! hapless Daughter! Miserable Mother!

Polyx. And must I lie in the cold Grave, without thee!

Hec. No, no, I'll haste, and make an end of Life.

Polyx. I once was free, yet must I die a Slave!

Hec. Depriv'd of every Child! of every Comfort!

Polyx. What shall I say to the great Shade of *Hector*?

Or how recount this fatal Day to *Priam*?

Hec. Oh! tell my Child and Husband, the most wretched
Of Nature's whole Creation, is their *Hecuba*!

Polyx. Let me embrace the Breasts that nourish'd me!

One last Embrace! ----- Farewell! ----- Farewell for ever!

Hec. Inexorable Fate! Relentless Heaven!
Untimely Death!

Polyx. And give my last Farewell

To *Polydor*, my Brother, here in *Thrace*:

Say thou, his dying Sister wishes Health.

Hec. Does *Polydor* yet live? I fear, I doubt.

Polyx. He lives; yes, he will live, when this sad Parting
Shall be forgot, to close thy dying Eyes.

Hec.

Hec.

Hec. Oh! I die every Hour, and every Moment!
My Sorrows numberless! and every Sorrow
A pointed Death!

Polyx. Conduct me, sage *Ulysses*,
Lead to the fatal Tomb-----Cover, ye Virgins,
Hide with my Veil, those Eyes already sunk
And lost in Grief----- Oh thou diffusive Glory!
Light of the Day! Farewell! No more these Eyes
Shall feel thy Beams, till dread *Pelides'* Sword
Pierces my Heart, and gives eternal Night.

Hec. Oh, stay my Daughter! take thy Mother with thee!
Leave me not joyless, hopeless, childless! -----Ah!
She's gone! for ever gone! -----Curs'd be the Name
Of *Helen!* *Lacedemon's Helen!* Bane

Of *Troy* and me---- I sink---- my feeble Limbs
Refuse their Weight----- Oh welcome, welcome Death!

[*She swoons into the Arms of her Women,
and is borne into her Pavilion.*]

End of the Second ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

TALTHYBIUS, IPHIS, HECUBA.

Talthybius.

YE Trojan Virgins, where shall I behold
Your Queen; the Pride and Glory once of *Asia*?
Iph. Behold her prostrate on the Earth, *Talthybius*;
On the cold Pavement.

Tal. Oh, supreme *Jove*! Father of Gods and Men!
Art thou unmindful of the human Race,
Leaving the Guidance of their Fate to Fortune?
Or dost thou punish thus their weak Ambition,
When vainly they believe their State divine?

Was not this Form, this most distressful Form,
Once Queen of wealthy *Phrygia*?-----Powerful, happy!
The Wife of *Priam*, and great *Hector's* Mother!
Her City now raz'd by the Victor's Sword,
Behold her Childless, struck with Age and Slavery!

Behold her hopeless, lost, a Prey to Sorrows!
Oh! may my Age find a propitious Death,
E're any Woe, like this, attacks my Soul!
Arise, Illustrious Miserable! Rise,
And deign to hear my Voice.

Hec. Ha! What art thou

That dares to visit thus Affliction? Say.

Tal. Talthybius, Minister of *Agamemnon*;

By his Commands I come.

Hec. rising. From *Agamemnon*!

Oh welcome! welcome! Is it then in Mercy
At last decreed, that I shall perish too
With my *Polyxena*? Haste, good old Man,

D

Away.

Away, conduct me swiftly to the Altar.

Tal. Not so; but you have leave to intomb your Child. This is my Message; this the *Grecian* Chiefs, And this the *Achaian* People, have decreed.

Hec. What dost thou say? Art thou then come to raise New Sorrows here-----to trouble the Departing?

-----Well! the sad Sacrifice is then perform'd,

My Daughter is no more. Say, Did you torture her, As your sworn Foe?-----Or offer her a Victim Pure, decent, pious, at your Hero's Tomb?

Tal. Oh! you demand a Tale will pierce your Soul. Yet let me pause a while, and drop a Tear, As then I did when I beheld the Sight.

The *Grecian* Troops were now drawn forth in Arms, Circling *Achilles'* Tomb-----That Hero's Son Led up his Victim, fair *Polyxena*, And placed her on the Summit of the Sepulchre. Behind her march'd a chosen Band of *Greeks*, Whom I commanded, to assist the Sacrifice. *Pelides'* Son, now from the golden Cenotaph, Pour'd forth Libation to his Father's Manes, By me commanding Silence; when the Youth Thus piously address'd his Father's Shade:

“ Oh, Son of *Peleus*! honour'd and immortal,

“ Receive propitious our Libation: Take

“ The sacred Rites we pay: Attend thy Victim:

“ Receive the Blood of this unspotted Maid,

“ Which in my own and in our Army's Name,

“ We offer up-----Oh! be propitious to us;

“ Loosen our Sails, give us a Wind for *Greece*,

“ That we may taste once more our Native Air!

He spoke, and straight the general Voice assented.

Now, from the golden Sheath, his shining Sword

Lighen'd in Air. And now the Sign was given

To bind the Sacrifice-----When, fair *Polyxena*,

Address'd the *Achaian* Chiefs, with Grace and Sweetness,

Not to be march'd-----“ Ye Heroes, said the Virgin,

“ By

" By whom *Troy* fell, by whom my Father perish'd,
 " And all our House----- Behold a willing Victim.
 " Oh! let not your rough Soldiers Hands offend
 " The chaster Duties of Humanity
 " And Tenderness. Strike where ye will, ye *Greeks*;
 " Yet let me to the Shades descend unbound,
 " A Princess, not a Captive!" -----A loud Murmur
 Ran thro' the Line----- and *Agamemnon* order'd
 They shou'd not bind their Victim----- They obey'd.
 The Virgin now, with her own beauteous Hands,
 Unloos'd her Veil, disclos'd her snowy Bosom;
 Then, bending to the Earth her tender Knee,
 The Tears fast falling from her lovely Eyes;
 She said: " Oh! Son of this unconquer'd Hero,
 " Strike where thou wilt; behold my Bosom ready:
 " Release me from Captivity and Woe!
 The Youth reluctant, with his Face averted,
 Sheath'd in her Breast the Steel----- Sudden away
 The precious Fountains gushed, and the warm Life
 Swift issued thro' the Wound; yet did she cover,
 Now dying, with her Hand, her wounded Bosom,
 Decent and chaste in Death.

Iph. How are the Gods incens'd, that thus they punish
 Unweary'd, unappeas'd, the House of *Priam*!

Hec. Oh, my *Polyxena*! thy heroick Death
 Was like a Virgin, and a Princess, bred
 In Virtue's School, the School of Worth and Honour.
 The generous Soil produces generous Fruit;
 And Virtue springs from Virtue. Griefs may press,
 And sore Calamities afflict the Best:
 Yet will they rise superior to the Strokes
 Of Fate, and flourish in Adversity.

Enough of this-----Return, thou good old Man,
 Virtuous *Takbybius*, to the *Grecian* Camp,
 And say, The Parent of *Polyxena*
 Desires the Body of her Child may rest
 Untouch'd by vulgar Hands---- The Virgin Honours

D 2

Due

Due to her Sex, must by her Sex be paid.
 Pray them to stay the Licence of the Soldier :
 Let them not violate with impious Touch
 The dear Remains of chaste *Polyxena*.

And thou, my faithful Servant, pious *Iphis*,
 Assisted by my Women, bring her Body
 To this Pavilion-----Fill thy sacred Urn
 From the salt Flood, that we may purify
 The lov'd Remains. These Rites the Gods demand,
 The Gods and Virtue. From our *Trojan* Captives,
 Perhaps we may collect such Female Ornaments,
 Sav'd from the Sack of *Troy*, as may invest
 Her pious Limbs, with Decency and Honour.

Oh *Priam's* House! once Wealthy, Powerful, Great,
 To what a poor Account, are all thy Honours,
 Thy Pride, thy People, Glories, now reduc'd!
 We swell with empty Titles, raise our Names
 On fading Trifles. Conquest, Fame, and Empire,
 Are mighty Sounds, that make a Noise, and vanish.
 Virtue alone is the Support of Honour.

End of the Third ACT.

ACT

ACT IV.

Iphis followed by Trojan Women bearing on a Bier the Body of Polydor; they place it in the Pavilion.

IPHIS, ISMENE.

Iphis.

SA Y, where's the Queen, the first in Misery!

Yet Human Nature never suffer'd Ills

Like these! Calamities unknown before!

Ism. Why does thy mournful Voice still utter Woe?

Will thy sad boding Omens never cease?

Iph. I bring new Sorrows; dost thou hope to hear,

Amidst Affliction, hear, the Voice of Joy?

Ism. Behold her here: She comes, she meets her Sorrows.

Enter HECUBA.

Iph. Oh! more than Words can speak you, more unhappy! Robb'd of thy Husband, Country, Children, Freedom!

Hec. Yet these are no new Evils: Lo! I bear

With Patience every Ill, as Heav'n ordains.

Thou hast perform'd my Orders, thou hast brought

The Body of *Polyxena*? — prepare

The Funeral Rites — We must obey our Fate!

Iph. Alas! she knows not; she deplores *Polyxena*;

she knows not that this Bier sustains the Body

Of her lov'd Son, her murder'd *Polydor*.

Oh *Hecuba*! Behold a Sight will shake

Thy Soul, with Horrors yet unknown! — Behold

Thy *Polydor*! His Face swoln with the Flood;

Murder'd by some inhospitable Hand!

Hec. Hah! — 'Tis the Face — the Face of *Polydor*,

Trusted

E

Trusted to *Thracian Polymnestor's* Care;

It is the Face of murder'd *Polydor*!

—— Ye Gods —— Ye righteous Gods, do I complain
That your Decrees are hard? Inur'd to bear
Your Wrath Divine! —— let not my patient Soul
Utter a Groan against your high Commands.

Iph. Behold! Sensation sinks beneath the Weight;
She stands a marble Statue of Affliction;
Her Eyes fix'd on her Son.

Hec. —— My *Polydor*!

What! not one Tear! — Oh tell me, say, good *Iphis*,
What fatal Hand destroy'd this last dear Hope
Of *Priam's* House? —— his miserable House!

Iph. On the salt Ooze we found the wounded Body.

Hec. Drown'd by the Flood, or wounded by the Spear?

Iph. Yon ebbing Surge had thrown its floating Burthen
Upon the Shore, yet wounded by the Spear.

Hec. The Vision then was a Prophetick Vision;
The Spectre then spoke Truth.

Ism. Who slew thy Son?

What did the Shade foretel?

Hec. —— That *Thracian* Wretch,

Curs'd *Polymnestor*! to whom *Priam* gave

The Care and Guardianship of the lov'd Youth.

Iph. The Thirst of Gold perhaps provok'd the Deed;

The Treasures good old *Priam* trusted with him,

To save him from Dishonour and Captivity.

Hec. Oh impious Thirst! inhospitable! base!

Unprincipely Vice! detested Avarice!

Low, slavish Sin! — Cou'd the mean Love of Dross

Tempt him to violate all human Duties!

Iph. Behold, Great *Agamemnon*! Cease your Complaints:

Receive the Visit of the King in Silence.

A G A M E M N O N, I P H I S, H E C U B A.

Agam. Good *Hecuba*, why dost thou thus delay

To give Sepulchral Honours to thy Child,
Thy pious Daughter? — As *Talthybius* pray'd,
We have preserv'd her from th' unhallow'd Hand
Of the rough Soldier — Haste, perform the Rites,
The Funeral Rites, due to thy Name and House.

Alas! what Youth is this, within thy Tent,
Bloody and dead? His Vestments speak him *Trojan*.
Hec. Unhappy! Mournful! let my Woes be silent,
As they are great: — And shall they die in Silence?
Die unreveng'd? Or shall I prostrate fall

At *Agamemnon's* Knee, and ask his Aid?

Agam. Why dost thou turn away, and hide thy Mourning?
What means this Sight? Who is this slaughter'd *Trojan*?

Hec. Yet should the King refuse to hear his Slave,
His humblest Slave; it would augment my Sorrows.

Agam. Let *Agamemnon* then relieve thy Sorrows.

Hec. Yes, Vengeance must be had. When I reflect
that my remaining Life is all devoted

to avenge my slaughter'd Children, — there is left
no other Mean — I must address *Atrides*.

Great King of Kings, thus low I bend, and touch
thy sacred Knee: Oh give me thy Protection!

Agam. You wou'd have Life and Freedom — both are
granted:

I receive them both from *Agamemnon's* Hand.

Hec. Neither, great Prince; 'tis Vengeance I demand:

let me but revenge the Death of *Polydor*,
and after live in Servitude for ever!

Agam. And how, which Way shou'd I assist thy Rage?

Hec. Behold my Tears; behold this wounded Body.

This was my Son; sprung from the Loins of *Priam*!

You know't the Fate of War destroy'd my Children,
and many fell with *Troy*; This only left —

Agam. Hadst thou a Son who did not perish there?

Hec. This One preserv'd alone with fruitless Care,
you behold —

Agam. ——— And where was he preserv'd,

When the whole City perished?

Hec. ——— Here in *Thrace*,

To wicked *Polymnestor* was he trusted.

Agam. To *Polymnestor*, now the King of *Thrace*?

Hec. To that inhuman Monster was he trusted.

That most inhospitable bloody *Thracian*!

Agam. Where didst thou find the Body? who restor'd it?

Hec. My Women found it on the sandy Shore; ——— their pious Care
Found the dear murder'd Youth ——— their pious Care
Restor'd him to his wretched Mother's Eyes.

Agam. Oh Woman! thy Calamities are great.

Hec. The Wrath of Gods or Men cannot increase them.

Agam. Misfortune is thy Lot ———

Hec. ——— I am Misfortune.

Yet hear, *Atrides*, now, wherefore I fell

Prostrate before thee, and implor'd thy Aid.

You see this false inhospitable *Thracian*,

Regardless of the Duties due to Gods

Or Men; you see him bath'd in Princely Blood!

Perfidious, at our Table did he sit;

Was number'd with our Friends, and trusted highly;

Yet in cool Thought, premeditatedly cruel,

Murder'd my Son; and then refus'd him Burial:

Cast on the stormy Seas a friendless Corpse,

To combat with contending Winds and Waves.

Great Prince! we are but few, a small weak Band

Of female Captives; yet the Gods are powerful.

We know their Laws, and we believe them just:

Yes, we believe that Punishment is due

To those, who violate the Laws of Right,

Who keep not Faith; who prey on Orphan's Blood,

And break the Social Ties that bind Society.

Behold then, and redress the Wrongs we suffer:

Stand, I beseech you, and behold in me

The Image of Distress ——— I was a Queen,

Happy

A TRAGEDY.

25

Happy and glorious! now the greatest Title
 I have to boast, is *Agamenmon's* Slave!
 I was a Mother, blest with many Children!
 Mother of Princes! now depriv'd of all!
 An Exile, in Decline of Life! deserted!
 Afflicted! Injur'd! Succourless, and Friendless!
 Oh! wherefore dost thou turn away thy Face?
 I find my Tongue knows no perswasive Arts;
 Unus'd to ask, unskilfully I beg:
 Wont to bestow, not to receive a Boon.
 Oh my proud Heart! has not Captivity
 Yet taught thee Lowliness? Behold yon smok!
 It vanishes in Air: So do my Prayers
 Unheard, unheeded ——— Oh ye powerful Gods!
 Give me your Eloquence, give every Limb
 And every Look a Tongue, to plead the Cause
 Of injur'd Innocence. ——— Then prostrate, mourning,
 In every Language wou'd I speak the Cause
 Of injur'd Innocence ——— Oh! mighty Lord!
 Sole Light and Conduct of the *Græcian* Host;
 Stretch forth thy Arm: — Do Justice to the Wrong'd,
 Who thus demand it in the Name of Heaven:
 Justice! the sacred Attribute of Gods
 And Kings, instructed to reward and punish
 The Good and Bad ——— Desert not thy high Trust.
Agam. Oh *Hecuba!* my Soul is touch'd with Pity:
 I hear, and wou'd redress thy just Complaints,
 In Honour to the Gods, to Thee, to Justice:
 I wou'd redress thy Wrongs; yes, I wou'd punish
 This base, inhospitable, bloody *Thracian*.
 But lo! he is a King ——— the *Græcian* Arms
 Rest on his Soil, and Punishment from me
 Might stir our Soldiers ——— the unthinking Crowd
 Wou'd judge me partial in the Cause of *Troy*,
 And murmur at the Justice of their General.
Hec. Idly and vain we boast of Liberty,

When

Happy

When the whole human Race are Slaves ! This Wretch
 Obeys his Pride ; Another serves his Gold :
 Here Lust and Anger govern ; the wild Multitude
 Weighs down the Princely Legislator's Justice ;
 And Kings obey the Crowd . — Since then you fear
 Your People's Wrath ; leave, leave to me alone
 This Act of Vengeance ; let your high Command
 Restrain the Soldier, suffer not their Arms
 To impede my just Revenge, and leave to me
 To punish this inhuman Murderer.

Agam. What ! shall thy feeble Arm then wield the Sword ?
 A female Courage punish this Barbarian ?
 Or shall he fall by Stratagem, or Poison ?

Where are thy Friends ? thy Aid ? thy Strength ? thy Interest ?
Hec. In this Pavilion. I and my *Trojan* Women,
 Sacred from vulgar Eyes, here live in private.
 With these alone will I revenge my Cause,
 And punish this vile Traytor.

Agam. — — — How weak

Is thy Resolve ? What Courage is in Women ?

Hec. Where Force is wanting, Stratagem may conquer.

Agam. What Stratagems can Female Arts prepare ?

Hec. Yet Women slew *Aegyptus'* haughty Sons,
 Exterminating their whole Race from *Lemnos*.
 But be it as it will ; To me alone,

And to my Women leave this Enterprize :

Give thy safe Conduct thro' the *Græcian* Camp

To this my Servant. — Good *Ismene*, go ;

Haste to this *Thracian* Slave ; say thou, His Queen,
Say, Hecuba, his once much honour'd Mistress,

Demands to see him, to communicate

A Secret, that his Ears alone must hear ;

A Secret for the Good of him and his.

Bid him prepare to bring his Children with him ;

They too must hear, in Confidence, my Council.

Great *Agamemnon*, let us yet defer,

A little yet, my Daughter's Sepulture,

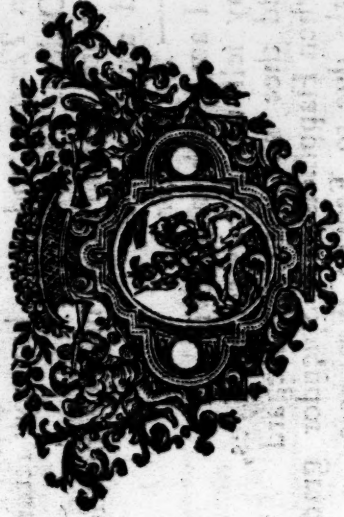
That

That *Polydor* may share the Rites with her:

Let the same Funeral Fire ascend at once
To Heaven, and mix their kindred Flames together:
Let the same Urn contain my Childrens' Ashes.

Agam. Take thy Desires — As yet the Winds deny
To fill our Sails — still must we here remain,
'Till gracious Heaven shall favour with a Gale
Our Prayers and Hopes — Haste then and execute;
Perform thy Vengeance — When the Guilty fall,
Whoever strikes, the Gods assist the Blow.

End of the Fourth ACT.



ACT

That

A C T V

POLYMNESTOR, H E C U B A.

O H! most belov'd among the Sons of Men,
 Once mighty *Brian*! — Honour'd *Hecuba*!
 Permit my Eye — to thee and fair *Polyxena*,

To drop a social Tear! — Ah! let not Man,
 Frail Man, believe that Happiness is lasting!
 The Gods confound and mix our Joys and Sorrows;
 Yet still we must obey without a Murmur,
 Preserve our Piety thro' every Woe.

—— But it avails not to lament the Sorrows,
 We cannot help. —— You will excuse my Absence,
 Employ'd at Distance when the *Græcian* Fleet
 First touch'd on *Thrace*; and now, but now return'd,
 I heard your Orders, I attend you: Lo!
 Your Servant waits; unfold your high Commands,
 And be obey'd and honour'd.

Hec. —— *Polymnestor*!

Environ'd, as I am, with many Evils,
 Think not thy self ungracious to my Eyes,
 If they behold thee not with the Regard
 They wont, when Happiness and Splendor grac'd them;
 There is a little due to Female Weakness,
 A little there is due to Change of Fortune:
 The Captive and the Princes differ much.

Polym. No Wonder, Madam; yet relate your Orders;
 Say, what are your Commands to *Polymnestor*.

Hec. Somewhat in private of the last Importance,
 Would I reveal to thee and to thy Children:
 Command your Servants to depart our Tent;
 The Business fits not servile Ears.

Polym.

Polym. — Away, — a friendly Conference
You of my Train depart; a friendly Conference
Demands not Spies — and such are waiting Slaves.
Say, now we are in private, gracious *Hecuba*,
What wou'd thy hapless Fattene ask of me?
Of me, abounding now in every Blessing!

Hec. First for my Son, my dearest *Polydor*,
Whom good old *Priam* trusted to thy Hand;
Does he yet live?

Polym. — He lives; your future Hope
Lives by my Care, conceal'd from hostile Eyes:
If this can make you happy, be most happy.

Hec. Oh worthy *Polymenor*! now you speak
The Words of Comfort.

Polym. — Say, is there ought more
You wou'd demand? Your Servant waits your Will.

Hec. Does *Polydor* remember yet his Parent?

Polym. He does; and did intreat he might have Leave
To visit you in private.

Hec. — And the Treasure,
Old *Priam* trusted to your pious Care,
Is safe, unhurt by adverse Fortune?

Polym. — Safe,
Guarded within my Palace.

Hec. — Guard it well,
And let no mean Desires betray thy Soul
To wrong an Orphan.

Polym. — No; my Soul abhors it.

Hec. Now to our Business — wherefore I desir'd
Thine and thy Children's Presence, do'st thou know?

Polym. Reveal your Pleasure, and command your Slave.

Hec. Oh! may thy Child love thee, as thou hast lov'd
My *Polydor*!

Polym. — What is the weighty Secret
You wou'd communicate to me and mine?

Hec. The *Trojans* have in different secret Places
Hid mighty Sums of Treasure, the dear Remnant

OF

Polym.

Of what was sav'd from the dire Sack of Troy,
Reveal'd to me in Trust for *Polydor*.

Polym. For *Polydor*, thy Son! when Heaven ordains
To raise thy Name from Earth, his future Aid
And this you wou'd report to *Polydor*,
By me?

Hec. ——— By thee, good *Polymnestor*!
For thou art known to be a virtuous Man.

Polym. Yet say, how is the Presence of my Children
Concern'd in this Discovery?

Hec. ——— If Death
Shou'd overtake thee soon; these Witnesses
Are young, and may support the Truth with Honour.
Polym. Well hast thou said.

Hec. ——— You know *Minerva's* Temple;
The Temple sacred to the *Trojan* Goddess.

Polym. There lies the Gold? But by what Token, say,
How shall we find it?

Hec. ——— Underneath a Stone,
A Stone of Jett, rising into an Eminence
Behind her Altar.

Polym. ——— Haste then, let us haste;
Is there ought more my Sov'raign wou'd command?

Hec. That you too wou'd receive into your Care!
The little Treasure that I have ——— These *Greeks*
Are covetous and false.

Polym. ——— They are indeed!
Inform me where, where is this Treasure laid?

Hec. In the Pavilion that adjoins to this,
It lyes conceal'd, a little precious Heap.

Polym. The *Græcian* Chiefs fill these adjacent Tents.
Hec. The *Trojan* Women, a few Captive Women,
Are only there.

Polym. ——— But, may they too be trusted?

Hec. Faithful and true, well prov'd in all Events;
They never can betray their much-lov'd Mistress.

Haste then, away! the *Greeks* prepare to sail,

Our Time is short; haste with thy Children, go

Into that Tent; thy Duty to my *Polydor* — Follow me;
 Shall there be well rewarded — Follow me;
 Let me conduct thee, virtuous *Polymnestor*! [*Ex. all but Iph.*
Iphis. Away, thou Wretch: Justice awaits thee soon;
 Soon shalt thou fall, big with the Hopes of Gain,
 In the full Pride and Hope of Happiness.

The Mariner, toil'd in the burning Sun,
 Thus seeks Refreshment from the sultry Ray,
 In the smooth Flood; his pliant Limbs divide
 The Waves, and sport within the flatt'ring Mirror:
 When now ingulph'd beneath the whirling Pool,
 Sudden he sinks, never to rise again.
 Obnoxious to the just, the righteous Gods,
 Thus may such impious Wretches bleed, descend
 Untimely to the Shades of black *Cocytus*!
 To *Pluto's* Realms! — Hark! the great Work is doing;
 By female Hands he dies: — Ye *Trojan* Heroines
 Strike home, avenge the Death of *Polydor*.

HECUBA enters.

Hec. Ye sacred Gods of Vengeance, 'tis perform'd!
 Yes, I have sacrific'd to *Polydor*.

Rest, rest, thou troubled Spirit of my Son.

Oh! my Soul feels Relief; lightly she bounds

Amidst her great Distresses, with the Transport
 Of just Revenge.

Iph. — Is then the Traytor punish'd?

Hec. He lives; but blind, depriv'd of Day and Comfort;

He weeps in Blood his Crimes, his Eyes extinguisht:

Yet e'er they lost the Day, they saw his Children,

Yes, both his Children bleed: Oh! righteous Justice!

Iph. Prais'd be the Gods, who crown'd with this Success
 Thy poor Remains of Life.

Hec. — Thou shalt behold him;

Our *Trojan* Women have unbound him now;

A miserable Wanderer, depriv'd

Of Light and Joy — wishing, and yet unable

To take Revenge; torn with Despair and Rage:

F 2

Behold

Behold him then ——— and let vain Man behold,
By what weak Instruments the Powers Divine
Administer their Vengeance? ——— Lo! he comes.

Enter POLYMNESTOR.

Pol. Oh woeful Wretch! ah! whether shall I roam?
Where wander void of Sight? and how revenge
My murder'd Babes? What? no Relief! no Comfort!
Curs'd be the Womb that bore me! doubly curs'd
That pitiless and Man-destroying Sex,
Who nourish'd first my Youth! Curs'd be the Light!
Which I shall ne'er behold ——— the Strings of Sight
Torn from their bleeding Orbs ——— Merciless Women
Your Love and Flatt'ed both are in Extremes,
By Passion sway'd ——— Oh cruel bloody Sex!
Shall a few Captive Women, unreveng'd,
In my own Realms destroy me? Will *Aerides*
Protect *Barbarian* Slaves, the wretched Out-casts
Of ruin'd *Troy*? Oh Gods! Oh Men! ——— and Kings,
The sole Protectors of the Rights of Kings!
Hear me; revenge me; let the savage Rocks,
And barren Mountains echo round my Wrongs.
Where shall I tread? where shall my ailing Feet
Darkling and guideless, bear their injur'd Master?
A Vessel, in a wild tempestuous Sea,
Beat by the Winds!

Iph. ——— Oh Wretch! unhappy Caitiff!
The Measure of the Woes thou gav'st is paid,
Repaid with Interest, and the Gods are just.

Pol. Haste, arm my *Thracian* Heroes, mount, prepare,
Charge, charge the Foe; and ye, *Achaian* Chiefs,
I ask your Aid; punish these impious Women.
Aloud I ask, aloud proclaim my Wrongs,
Demanding Vengeance on these Murtherers.

Alas! no friendly Ear receives my Plaints:
Haste then away; swift, let us pierce the Clouds,
Divide the Milky Way, rise on *Orion*,
Or burning *Syrus*; let his fiery Beams

Dart hot Contagion on the House of *Priam*!

Or let me sink to *Plato's* gloomy Realms,
A miserable Plaintiff there for Justice!

Iph. Thus do the Wretched change from Pain to Pain :
Variety in Woe appears like Comfort.

Agam. What Tongue is this, that clamours loud for Vengeance,

And importunes both Gods and Men to hear.

Pol. Oh, dearest among Men, wife *Agamemnon* !
Blest'd be thy well-known Voice ! — Behold my Sufferings.

Agam. Oh ! *Polymnestor* ! what avenging Hand
Has torn away thy precious Balls of Sight ?

Pol. — *Hecuba*,

Thy Captive *Hecuba* ; she and her Women
Have thus destroy'd, doubly destroy'd thy Friend.

Agam. Say, *Hecuba*, was it thy Hand committed
This bloody Deed ?

Pol. — Where is she ? let me find her :
I'll give her Body to the Mountain Wolves,

And glut the savage Pard with *Trojan* Blood.
Agam. Alas ! his Pains are great.

Pol. — By all the Gods !

In their high Names I kneel, and ask *Atrides*,
That he will suffer me to execute,

To consummate with my own Arm my Vengeance.

Agam. Hear me. Refrain awhile thy Thirst of Blood ;
Suppress thy Passion, and let Reason speak.

We will with most impartial Justice hear

Both *Hecuba* and you — Say, *Polymnestor*,
How did you merit, and from whom, the Woes
You suffer ? — Your Calamity is great.

Pol. I will relate my Grievs, valiant *Atrides*,
With Truth recount each painful Circumstance.

The youngest Son of *Priam*, *Polydor*,
Before the Sack of *Troy*, was by his Father
Unto my Hand intrusted — When the Town
Now lay in Ashes, when victorious *Greece*
Triumph'd o'er *Asia*, true it is, my Spear

Destroy'd

Destroy'd this *Polydor*. This Act appears
Inhuman; yet when you shall hear my Reasons,
They will be own'd both provident and wise.

It was the Weal of *Greece* requir'd his Death:

This hostile Branch of *Troy* might take new Root;
Trouble the World's Repose in future Time,

Lay waste Mankind, and sow new Seeds of War:

Therefore I slew him; therefore *Hecuba*

Betray'd me by curs'd Arts, to my Destruction;

She tempt'd me with Gold, she gave me up

A Prey to those devouring Wolves, her Women,

The *Trojan* Captives — Sudden they surpris'd me,

Bound me, and in my Sight murder'd my Sons;

With unrelenting Hands, before my Eyes,

They shed their Blood, and then still unrelenting

Put out these Eyes ——— Supreme Calamity!

Thus do I suffer, mighty *Agamemnon*!

For thee, and in the Cause of *Greece* I suffer.

This only will I add; Our Elements

Nourish no Poison like a vengeful Woman.

Hec. The Cause of Virtue needs not, wife *Atrides*,

The Paint of Words; and Eloquence is useless,

Where Truth and Justice reign——Yet let me answer

In few, what this Barbarian has affirm'd.

First then, he says that for the Weal of *Greece*

He slew my Child; for *Greece* and *Agamemnon*.

Does the Barbarian then believe his Friendship

Can aid the *Græcian* Arms, assist their Virtue?

Why then demands he not Alliance with you!

Inroll'd among the Princes of the War?

Declare the Truth, perfidious Wretch! 'Twas Gold,

The base Desire of Gold, that caus'd the Death

Of my dear Son —— Say thou, when *Troy* yet flourish'd,

When *Priam* liv'd, and *Hector's* Godlike Arm

Wielded the shining Spear; wherefore not then

Did'st thou destroy my Child, or give him up

Alive to *Greece*; if so the Good of *Greece*

Requir'd this Boon of thee? —— No, Traitor! ——

No,
When

When hostile Fires declar'd our City lost,
When *Troy* was not; then, then thy bloody Hand,
Murder'd within thy House, thy House, his Refuge,
Within thy Bosom, murder'd my dear Child.

Oh! great *Atrides*, shou'd thy Dignity
Protect this guilty Man; in Time to come,
Virtue will seek no Refuge from the Great,
And all the sacred Rites of Hospitality

Will unreveng'd be broke — The social Virtues
All join in the high Name of Heaven for Justice.

Iph. How eloquent is Truth! In Virtue's Cause!

Who is not warm'd! both Gods and Men give Audience.

Agam. A Judge is the great Deputy of Heaven;
and shou'd determine with impartial Virtue:

Oh *Polymnestor*! not the Weal of *Greece*,
Not *Agamemnon*, did provoke this Deed,

The Murder of young *Polydor*; but Gold,

The Love of Gold. You form a weak Defence.

Let you Barbarians may, perhaps, believe

the Breach of Faith, the Murder of your Guest
or trivial Crimes — We *Greeks* think not so.

Say, can I then do Justice, and acquit thee?

No, I must share thy Guilt, shou'd I absolve thee.

Pol. Out-worded by a Slave! a Female Slave!
I glow my Rank! a Captive!

Agam. — *Polymnestor*,
the virtuous Mind will be in every State
superior to the bad — Vice is Captivity.

Pol. Oh! for my murder'd Children! my lost Eyes!
Give Pity, King of Men!

Agam. — I pity *Heeuba*.

He too has lost a Son by barbarous Hands.

Pol. Ah! 'tis beneath your Nature and your State,
insult a Wretch, thus loaded with Affliction!

Agam. 'Tis you insult your Judge: When you demand,
that I should punish Murder, you forget
our Hands are bath'd in Blood.

Pol. — Yet my griev'd Soul

somewhat lighter, since the Prophets say,

That

That *Hecuba* shall suffer Transformations,
And Evils yet in Store : So *Dionysus*,
Our *Thracian* Prophet, surely has foretold.

Agam. Did he foretell these Evils you now suffer ?
Well ——— let me prophesy ———

Pol. What ? great *Atreides* !

Agam. That you shall die a Death, worthy your Life,
Worthy your vicious Life. Seize him, ye Captives ;
You who began his Punishment, complete it.

Pol. Oh ! save me ! save me ! tho' my Life be wretched ;
Preserve me from these Captives.

Agam. Stop his Mouth ;

Convey him hence, beyond those Northern Hills
Whose Summits, hid in everlasting Snows,

A Thousand and a Thousand Winters whiten.

There on the Desert Mountains let him howl,

Howl to the Winds ; or with the prowling Wolf,

Bay the cold Moon, smote with Despair and Hunger ;

There, undeplor'd, among the Savage Race,

A Savage more forlorn and curs'd than they :

There, amid lasting Tortures let him waste

A wretched Life ——— his Guilt is meritorious.

Now, *Hecuba*, prepare for both thy Children

Their Funeral Rites ; and may the Flames ascend,

Together to the Gods ! ——— The Sailors shout ———

—— Again they shout ——— Lo ! a propitious Gale

Descends from Heaven ; we shall revisit Greece ;

And, after various Labours, breathe at last

Our Native Air : Thanks to the bounteous Gods !

Iph. Let not vain Mortals impiously pronounce

The high Decrees of Heaven, or good or bad ;

Beyond our erring Sight, their sacred Records ;

Inscrutable and wise, the Gods conceal.

But let us learn to bear, through every State,

Those Pleasures and those Pains the Fates allot.

In this short Precept is our Duty shown,

Do what you wish, may to your self be done.